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FUTURE PEACE OPERATIONS:  
Lessons From Bosnia

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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March 1996

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Abstract of  
FUTURE PEACE OPERATIONS: LESSONS FROM BOSNIA

The end of the Bi-polar world has increased for the requirement and scope of UN peace operations. This paper examines the current situation in Bosnia from an Operational Command and Control perspective. It points out the shortfalls of force structure, clear direction on both the strategic/operational level and the UN's inability to coordinate their and NATO's efforts. It will also discuss the need and framework for "robust" peace operations. It concludes with an examination of options for a command and control structure for future UN peace operations.

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FUTURE PEACE OPERATIONS: LESSONS FROM BOSNIA

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#### BACKGROUND

A brief review of the events leading to the current situation in Bosnia shows that the political, ethnic, religious and nationalistic drivers in this conflict should not be considered unique to that area. Similar seeds of discontent are present throughout the world.

The origins of the current situation in Bosnia can be traced back to the Middle Ages. The competing influences of the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Churches led to antagonism between the Croats (Roman Catholic) and the Serbs (Orthodox). This was further exacerbated with the invasion of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th Century and the conversion of many to Islam.

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in an effort to limit Russian influence in the area, assumed administrative control over the area. A move by the Austro-Hungarian Empire to annex the area resulted in a strong nationalistic reaction and lead to the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and the beginning of the first World War.

The government between the two World Wars was constructed around a federation forming the Yugoslav state. Much to the Croatians dismay this federation was dominated by the Serbs.

World War II brought with it a German puppet government dominated by the Croatians. This government's expressed goal was the elimination of the Serbs from the area.

The post-war government was dominated by the communist leader Tito and took the form of a loose federation with a great deal of

autonomy of the individual states. This resulted in stability throughout the region. During this period the Muslims gained national status separating them, as a group, from the Bosnian Serbs and Croats.

After Tito's death harmony within the republics began to disintegrate. A three part coalition government was formed with the Muslims at the lead. They asked for acceptance to the UN, became a member state and almost immediately ask for UN intervention.

"The current political situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina reflects the historical tension between Greater Serbian and Greater Croatian nationalism and the tendency of two major ethnic groups to form tactical alliances with each other against a third. The pattern of conflict between local Serbs and Croats over the area continues with the support and direction of powerful patrons in Serbia and Croatia who eye territorial gains. In all three ethnic groups, there are those who reject division along ethnic lines, favoring cooperation to build a unified, democratic state in Bosnia-Hercegovina that would protect the rights of all ethnic groups. This 'Yugoslav' sentiment is strongest in Sarajevo and other ethnically mixed areas, among wealthier, better educated people and among supporters of the Bosnia- Hercegovina government."<sup>1</sup>

#### CURRENT PEACE DEPLOYMENT

The mission throughout the area was motivated by a desire of the United Nations (UN) and its member states to alleviate the suffering caused by the ongoing war, ethnic cleansing, concentration camps and the massive refugee problem they caused. This was to be accomplished through the use of UN forces to provide protection for internationally sponsored humanitarian assistance activities aimed at supplying and protecting the local inhabitance while an active

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<sup>1</sup> Steven J. Woehrel, "Bosnia-Hercegovina: Background to the Conflict," CRS Report for Congress, January 21, 1993, p.4.

military conflict rages.<sup>2</sup> This mission, accepted and approved by the Security Council, was given to the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR). The mission began with the limited scope of opening the Sarajevo airport to allow for airborne delivery of humanitarian relief. This was later expanded, at the request of the Bosnian government, to include other areas of Bosnia and to include the delivery of supplies by armed ground convoy. As this mission continued the scope and numbers involved increased from the initial deployment of 14,000 to an UNPROFOR element now numbering over 24,000<sup>3</sup> from 36 nations under direct UN control.

As the fighting among the three ethnic factions continued to escalate the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) began to provide support for the implementation of several UN Security Council Resolutions (UN SCR). In July 1992 Standing Naval Forces Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) was established and "entered the Adriatic Sea and began Operating Maritime Monitor."<sup>4</sup> Its Mission was two fold; first, the monitoring of specific economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, secondly, enforcing an arms embargo against the warring parties in support of UN SCR 713 and 757. At the same time the Western European Union (WEU) was conducting separate but parallel monitoring operations.

This mandate was expanded through the UN SCR 787 which allowed boarding and search of all merchant traffic entering the Adriatic.

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Bair, "What Happened In Yugoslavia? Lessons For Future Peacekeepers," European Security, Summer 1994, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Cohen, "UN and Bosnia: Why Do The Peacekeepers Stay?" The New York Times, 20 April 1995, p. A3.

<sup>4</sup> J. M. Boorda, "Loyal Partners-NATO's Forces In Support of the United Nations," NATO's Sixteen Nations, 39 No. 1, 1994, p. 9.

The mission was then further expanded under UN SCR 820 to allow for the total blockade of the Montenegro coast. Shortly after the passage of UN SCR 820 NATO and the WEU decided to combine their operations under one command structure and form "Operation Sharp Guard". The two forces combined under COMNAVSOUTH and formed Task Force 440. The Task Force was augmented by ships from Standing Naval Force Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT). The three forces were organized, under Task Force 440; as STANAVFORLANT--CTG 440.1, STANAVFORMED--CTG 440.2 and the WEU--CTG 440.3. Each of these Task Groups rotate areas of responsibilities with one patrolling the Straits of Oranto another patrolling the coast of Montenegro and the third either in port or conducting training. The Task Force is also supported by Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) from COMARAIMED, a subordinate of COMNAVSOUTH, and are designated as CTF 431. Fighter aircraft are also available to support Operation Sharp Guard from their home base at Gioia del Colla along with carrier based aircraft when available. To date over 50,000 merchant ships have been challenged.<sup>5</sup>

Flight operations over Bosnia also began as a monitoring mission supported by NATO Airborne Early Warning (NAEW) aircraft under operation "Sky Monitor". When it became apparent that the flight ban imposed by UN SCR 781 was being widely ignored the Security Council past Resolution 816 calling for "all necessary measures" to ensure compliance with the established no fly zone, under operation "Deny Flight". Operation Deny Flight was

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<sup>5</sup>NATO Factsheet, "NATO/WEU Operation Sharp Guard," 7 July 1994, p. 2.

subsequently expanded to include close air support missions in support of UNPROFOR to prevent retaliation by the warring factions and to provide an offensive strike capability to prevent wide scale interference with humanitarian relief efforts.<sup>6</sup> Operational control of Deny Flight's 4,500 personnel from 12 NATO countries has been delegated from Supreme Allied Commander Europe through Commander-in-Chief Southern Europe to Commander, Allied Forces Southern Europe. The day-to-day mission tasking and control of the operation has been further delegated to Commander, 5th Allied Tactical Air Force (5th ATAF). Coordination between NATO and the UN ground forces is accomplished through an exchange of liaison officers from 5th ATAF and UNPROFOR headquarters<sup>7</sup> (Appendix A).

The efforts of NATO have, to a large extent, been frustrated by the "Dual Key" approach to Command and Control. Under the "Dual Key" concept all requests for air action in support of the UNPROFOR ground commander would have to be approved at the highest level of the UN organization before being acted upon by NATO. The ineffectiveness of this type of operational control became quite clear on 12 March 1994 when the UN requested NATO air intervention to protect UNPROFOR elements south of Bihac. The requested air attacks never took place. "The UN explained this was because of local atmospheric conditions and the fact the Serb cannons had stopped firing."<sup>8</sup> However NATO had a different view;

"...a spokesman pointed out that the attack had not been canceled because of bad weather but simply because of the

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<sup>6</sup>Boorda, p. 10-11.

<sup>7</sup>NATO Factsheet, "Operation Deny Flight," 9 December 1994, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>NATO: Defense and Security Committee, Draft Interim Report, "NATO, Peacekeeping and the Former Yugoslavia," May 1994, Annex II, p. 4.

fact that UNPROFOR had not confirmed its request. Diplomatic and military circles at NATO headquarters in Brussels emphasized the slowness with which UN and UNPROFOR procedures are carried out as well as the hesitation of the UN's representatives in Yugoslavia."<sup>9</sup>

Five days later, in an effort to streamline command and control procedures for providing close air support to UNPROFOR, NATO requested from the UN Secretary-General a detailed plan on how he intended to accelerate the process for authorizing possible military action in the future. NATO officials in Brussels, "emphasized that NATO does not want to detract from the responsibility of the UN, but above all, it wants to see 'more effectiveness' in the decision-making process and in the Chain-of-Command."<sup>10</sup> The Secretary-General delegated such authority to his special representative (Mr. Akashi) after an exercise showed that it would take several hours<sup>11</sup> of consultation before authorization could be granted by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. This incident showed that with the "Dual Key" approach to command and control not only was there no unity of command but there was questionable unity of effort. In late April 1994 when the situation in Gorazde worsened a "conflict arose between the UN and NATO forces over whether to start bombing and the timing of NATO action. NATO officials made clear their unhappiness with Mr. Akashi, who refused to authorize air strikes on 22 April after the Serbs persisted in attacking Gorazde despite the ultimatum."<sup>12</sup> The lack in unity of effort was further amplified when the UN commander on the ground called for air strikes, in

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Annex II, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Annex II, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> The first exercise took twelve hours.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. Annex II, p. 6.

response to the Serb's fourth cease-fire violation in a weeks time, and was rebuffed by Mr. Akashi. The frustrations over a lack of a centralized and focused military command and control effort moving toward a well defined objective was summed up by one NATO diplomat: "The procedure must be better than in the past. That does not mean that we want to control the whole thing. But there must be more flexibility as far as our objectives are concerned, and they must not be limited to what Mr. Boutros-Ghali is asking us to do."<sup>13</sup>

#### FUTURE PEACE OPERATIONS

After World War II peacekeeping operations were primarily conducted by lightly armed military personnel where a cease fire was already obtained, the consent and the cooperation of the warring parties was assured and the use of force was only in self-defense. However, with the end of the Cold War this is no longer the case.

There are increasing calls for UN intervention in areas where the threat to its forces is high. The success of future peace operations are dependent on a variety of factors. First, consent, or lack there of, from the belligerent parties. Second, a force structure and size that is sufficient to address the threat and allow for the accomplishment of the mission. Finally, a Command and Control structure that can bring together the multifaceted forces, both military and civilian agencies, required to stabilize and pacify the region.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. Annex II, p. 7.

John Mackinlay identifies three levels of force to deal with future situations throughout the world.

"Each force level has different military capabilities and limitations. The high-level of force is authorized and deployed to enforce. Nations unite and execute the stipulated conditions of a mandate against a designated aggressor. They do not act with the aggressor's consent. A high level-force is less multinational than the other two levels and may have a single nation command structure and it will operate in an active war zone. The Mid-level or 'Multifunctional' force is international in command and composition. It is more flexible and may be deployed in a number of civil assistance roles to help with the mediation process or protect/evacuate threatened populations. It is seldom symbolic and should be organized to anticipate violent challenges and take active measures, through force if necessary. Its success probably relies more on the ability of the UN's civil elements to achieve a long-term political plan than its military strength. The low-level force or 'Supervisory presence' is a largely symbolic military deployment. If weapons are carried they are for self protection. The military tasks are to witness, monitor and supervise. There is no expectation that they will have to restore situations that have broken down or that their activities will be seriously challenged. If conditions alter and consent is withdrawn or becomes unreliable, UN troops will not have the capability to re-establish peace on the ground."<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup>

Unquestionably future UN involvement in peace operations will center around the Multifunctional Force or Mid-level force as described above. Even though Mackinlay puts Bosnia into the Mid-level force his model does not fully account for the force structure or size required to resolve this type of situation. This type of "operation must generate sufficient visible combat power to ensure that the belligerents recognize the futility of opposition."<sup>16</sup> Forces must be sufficient to provide for its own security and its defense capabilities must be apparent. A rapid build up of forces

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<sup>14</sup> John Mackinlay, "Improving Multifunctional Forces," Survival, Autumn 1994, p.158.

<sup>15</sup> Force Structure: 200,000 High-level, 15,000 Mid-level, 1,000 Low-level

<sup>16</sup> John B. Hunt, "Thoughts On Peace Support Operations," Military Review, October 1994, p. 84.

must continue to insure the belligerents "understand that they face a formidable military potential whose determination must be taken seriously."<sup>17</sup> Concurrent with this military buildup diplomatic efforts must be ongoing between the belligerent forces to affect a cease-fire that can be monitored and if necessary enforced through selective and overwhelming military action. Once the cease-fire is in place the operational commander should develop a plan for the separation of belligerents through the establishment and patrol of buffer zones. "From an operational point of view, one of the most important lessons learned in the UNPROFOR experience has been that the failure to physically separate the parties beyond rifle range only serves to extend the conflict."<sup>18</sup> Once this is completed and some level of security and stability has been restored, civil affairs forces and non-governmental humanitarian agencies can be deployed. Political negotiations, involving all the belligerent parties, must now take place for the demilitarization of all warring forces through the "phased withdrawal to cantonments to be supervised by international observers"<sup>19</sup> and this should include the surrendering of weapons. Even though representatives of the belligerent forces were parties to this demilitarization agreement it does not insure compliance by all warring forces. Non-compliance by any faction of the belligerent forces must be answered with overwhelming and decisive force. This action must be limited in that it deals with the specific recalcitrant force involved in the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p. 80.

<sup>18</sup> Bair, p. 345.

<sup>19</sup> Hunt, p. 80.

violation. The action must be accompanied by Psychological Operations (PHYOPS) to ensure that the population at large and the belligerents understand that the action was taken, against a rogue element, to enforce an agreement to which they were all a party (Peace Enforcement). With these items accomplished and stability, security and freedom of movement established within the region civil affairs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private volunteer organizations (PVOs) can continue their tasks of humanitarian assistance, refugee relocation, infrastructure and nation building (Peacekeeping and Peace Building). On the strategic level formal negotiations between the belligerent parties can continue in an atmosphere of relative peace on a level playing field.

This type of peace operation requires the full coordination of land, sea, air, civilian agencies and diplomatic effort to accomplish the mission. This clearly has not happened in the ad hoc environment of Bosnia. Even though operation Sharp Guard, the bright spot in this situation, is effective in blockading the Montenegrin coast it has little formal contact with the UN. Operation Deny Flight has air forces in the area capable of supporting UNPROFOR on the ground. It has, however, been frustrated by unclear direction from the UN organization to which it has no formal command lines. The forces deployed on the ground are not sufficient in numbers or capability to provide for their own security let alone that of the enclaves or the humanitarian shipments they are tasked to protect. They are totally at the mercy of and their safety depends on the belligerent parties. An

illustration of the inability of UN forces to act happened on the 19 April 1995 in Ilidza, a suburb of Sarajevo held by the Serbs.

"Bosnian Serb forces fired mortars from within a United Nations weapons collection site set up last year. A platoon of Ukrainian soldiers from the United Nations Force was present. They fired some warning shots over the Serb's heads, but then stopped, deciding there was nothing that could be done to stop the mortars from being used."<sup>20</sup>

#### THE COMMAND AND CONTROL CHALLENGE

The lessons to be learned from Bosnia that should be applied to future peace operations at the strategic and operational level are two fold. First, a detailed mission and clear guidance must be given at the strategic level. It must address the desired end state, any political or military constraints and, for the most part, be unwavering in nature. Understandably this last requirement may be the most difficult to achieve when dealing with the multinational concerns of the UN. Secondly, a unified command structure must be established that can address the mission assigned, propose courses of action to accomplish that mission and coordinate efforts for deployment and employment of all forces assigned, both military and civilian.

In the case where a single nation has an overwhelming national interest in the events of a certain region the command and control structure will be along well established national and military

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<sup>20</sup> Roger Cohen, "UN and Bosnia: Why Do The Peacekeepers Stay?" New York Times, 20 April 1995, p. A3.

lines. This was the situation in Haiti where the United States used a Joint Task Force with all the associated force structure, intelligence gathering, logistics, PSYOPS and civil affairs capabilities to enter, coordinate and control the situation and accomplish its well defined mission.

Where multinational interests are involved, one nation or group of nations may take the lead. In this type of peace operation command and control (C2) lines could be established much as they were in the Gulf War. The Gulf War C2 arrangement proved to be an effective model when "national, ethnic and religious pride, along with politics and public perception, played as large a part in determining command relationships as did the military requirements".<sup>21</sup>

"Coalition forces C2 were established with separate, but parallel, chains of command under the United States and Saudi Arabia. All forces ultimately remained under their respective national authority. For the US-led western forces CINCENT had COCOM of forces from the United States, OPCON of forces from the United Kingdom and other western nations and TACON of French forces. The Saudi-led combined regional force component...had OPCON of all Arab/Islamic forces. Through this structure, the National Command Authorities of western nations retained command of their forces, while the Islamic nations authorized Saudi Arabia to exercise command of theirs."<sup>22</sup>

This was further supported by a Coalition Coordination, Communication and Integration Center (C3IC) which facilitated "the combined planning process and improved day-to-day integration of coalition operations".<sup>23</sup> This model will, in instances where nations conducting peace operations in support of UN resolutions

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<sup>21</sup> U.S. Congress, "Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report," April, 1992, Appendix K, p. 20

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. K 20.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. K 24.

without the benefit of an organized command structure such as NATO, establish alliances to coordinate multinational activities (Appendix B).

However, the majority of future peace operations will, most likely, not be conducted with a single nation's flag at the lead. They are destined to be done under the flag of the United Nations with the member nations contributing forces and capabilities that bring with them the political concerns of that nation. To date the UN's ability to command and control a multifunctional force "has not been equal to the task"<sup>24</sup>. Proposals to reform UN command and control has taken the form of establishment of a standing force and a Military/Political Command at UN headquarters in New York. These proposals have not meet with success due to member nations unwillingness to give up their forces to another's control and increased cost of establishing such a force and command structure. However the requirement still exists for

"A military or civil-force headquarters that has to act in a fast moving, life threatening missions must be prepared to function effectively from the start. The headquarters staff must arrive in advance of the units under their command, as a working group, with an agreed modus operandi, a common language (in the organizational sense), some experience and a developed group ethos. At present, the UN system cannot provide a headquarters with these characteristics."<sup>25</sup>

Another "serious obstacle to more effective UN peace operations is the inability of senior UN officials...to coordinate various elements of the force and the powerful NGO's"<sup>26</sup> This has to

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<sup>24</sup> Mackinlay, p. 149

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 166

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 167

be done at all levels of the United Nations. The Clinton Administration has proposed changes in the UN headquarters staff to better coordinate future peace keeping operations. Its proposals include a headquarters staff that consists of: a Plans Division to prepare for future and ongoing operations; an Intelligence Division that is linked to field operations and all available intelligence sources; an Operations Division where a modern command, control and communication network is established to support the field commander or Head of Mission; a Logistics Division to manage contractual concerns and a deployment network; and a PSYOP Division to control information throughout the theater.<sup>27</sup> This proposal will do much to enhance the effectiveness of the UN. It brings to bear, in concept, the capabilities of all the member states. This staff should be manned with experienced staff officers from the member states and it should make up the corps staff of the Head of Peacekeeping Operations. This staff should also have representatives from the UN, NGO and POV agencies. Its mission will be in direct support of the UN Combined Task Force Commander(UNCTFC). However this staff (as with the U.S. Joint Staff) should not be in the direct chain-of-command between the Chief of Mission (COM)/UNCTFC and the Secretary-General and the Security Counsel.

Current Command and Control problem exists not only at the headquarters level but also at the operational level. John Mackinlay, in his article "Improving Multifunctional Forces", recommends establishment of a Joint Coordination Cell (JCC). Its

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<sup>27</sup>U.S. President. "The Clinton Administration's Policy on reforming Multinational Peace Operations." May 1994, pp. 7-8.

purpose is to act as "the central point where the key players in theater are represented, exchange information and coordinate their activities. The cell must be established at the highest level under the direct authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). The cell comprises representative officers from each military staff department and liaison officers from key humanitarian agencies involved"<sup>28</sup> (Appendix C). During the early stages of the operation (Peace Enforcement), the COM should reside with the military commander with the SRSG coordinating diplomatic efforts and the employment of various civil agencies. When the situation has stabilized, the SRSG assumes COM over activities in the theater in close coordination with the UNCTFC. As the mission proceeds from peace enforcement to peacekeeping and peace building, corresponding troop level reductions should take place.

The military side of this equation should be established along the model used in Desert Storm. With a single commander having OPCON or TACON over forces assigned. His responsibility, in close coordination with representatives from all the military forces assigned, is to plan for enforcement of the cease fire, demilitarization of belligerent forces and security of the theater. Participating forces, as in Desert Storm, will remain under their respective National Command Authority. Ground forces will be placed under a single Ground Force Component Commander who will coordinate the actions of various national forces and civil agencies throughout the theater. Additionally, national contingents should be given a

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<sup>28</sup> Mackinlay, p. 168

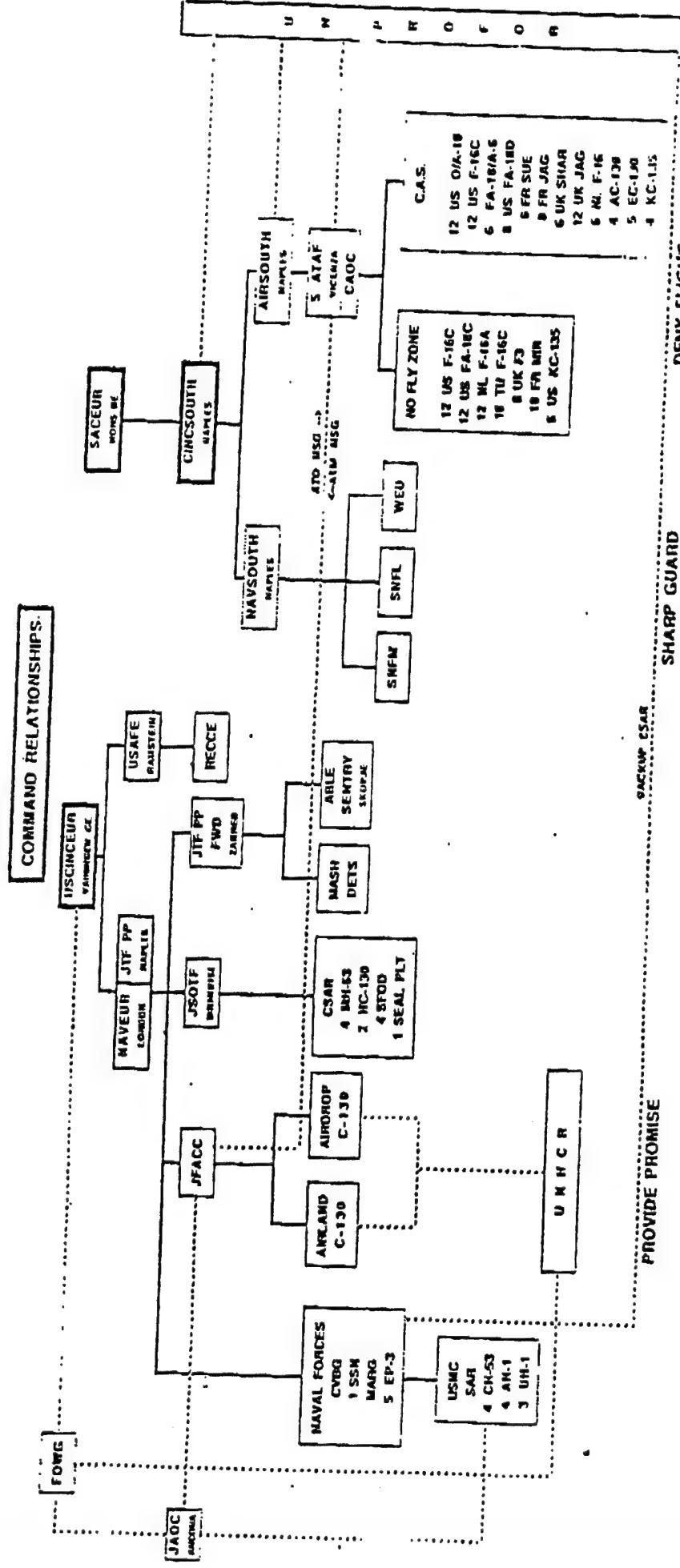
regional area of responsibility within the theater. This would place national forces under the direct control of their own national commanders at the tactical level. This would also help to alleviate political concerns at home and any doctrinal differences existing at the tactical level. Doctrinal differences existing between areas and national contingents will be resolved at the operational staff level.

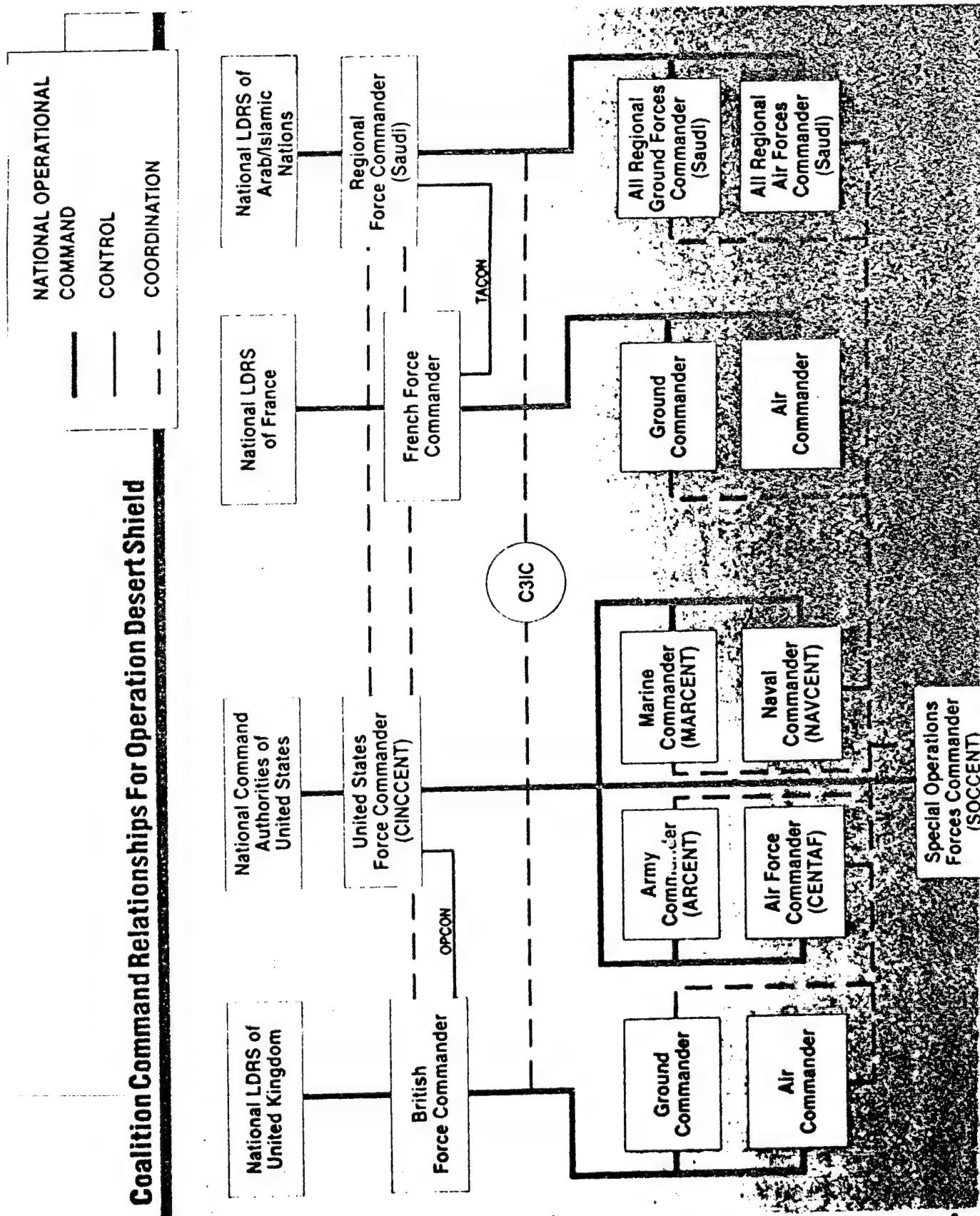
The Air Component Commander will control the air forces, both ashore and afloat, of all assigned nations. Tasking will be assigned via an air tasking order/message as was done in Desert Storm and is currently being done in Bosnia. The air component commander, in close coordination with UN relief agencies, NGOs and staff logisticians, schedule all relief flights into the area. This consolidated scheduling will allow for control and de-confliction of all flights over and into the theater. The Air Component Commander should plan contingency air operations to support ground operations. The Naval Component Commander will coordinate all blockade activity as well as mine counter measures and protection of relief convoys if required. Intelligence, logistics, administration, planning and SOF functions will be coordinated with the JCC staff.

#### CONCLUSION

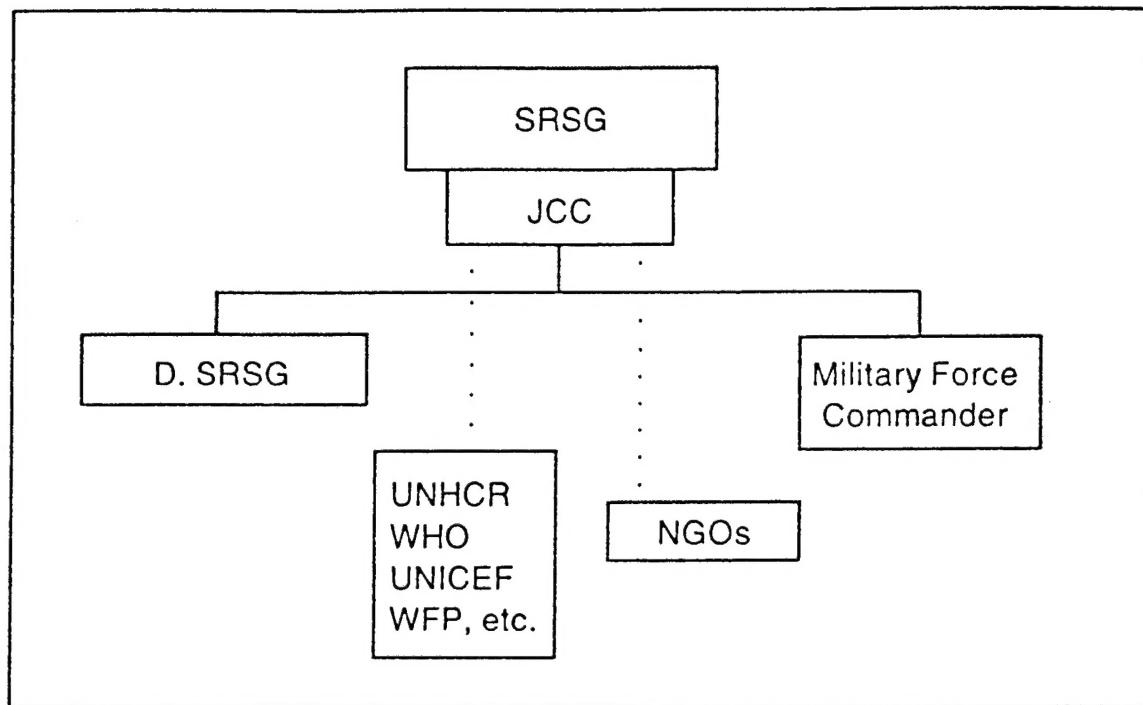
Future peace operations will be executed in one of three ways. Either by one nation with an overwhelming national interest acting unilaterally or as the strong lead element of a multinational force. However, there are, throughout the world, places like Bosnia that

will not raise the overwhelming concern of a "superpower". These challenges must be answered effectively before the seeds of their discontent spread to other areas. The only way that the UN can answer the call is first, through advanced planning that takes place on a focused headquarters staff, trained and experienced to accomplish the task. Second, through an operational staff and command and control structure that accounts for national concerns and security of contingent forces assigned, as well as, integration of all agencies involved. Finally at the strategic level, Security Counsel and Secretary-General, the mission and end state must be well defined. Political and diplomatic goals must be consistent with conditions in the field. The time table for success must be measured against realistic goals and accomplishments, not the clock.

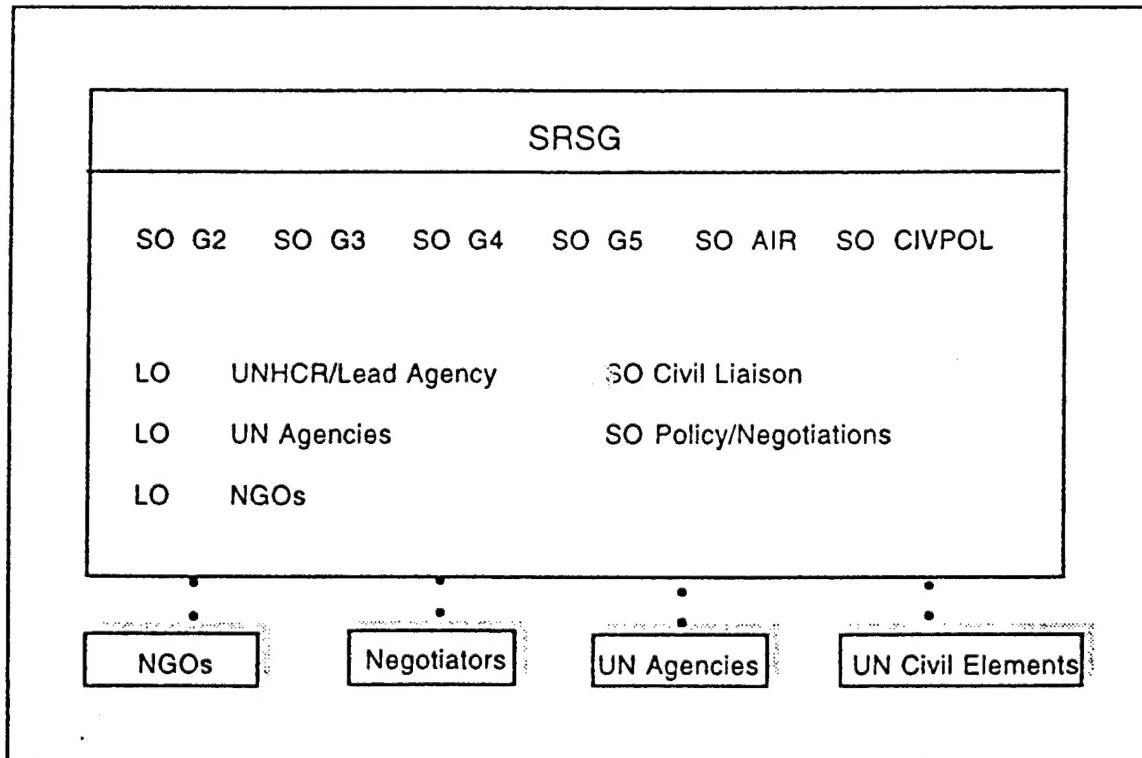




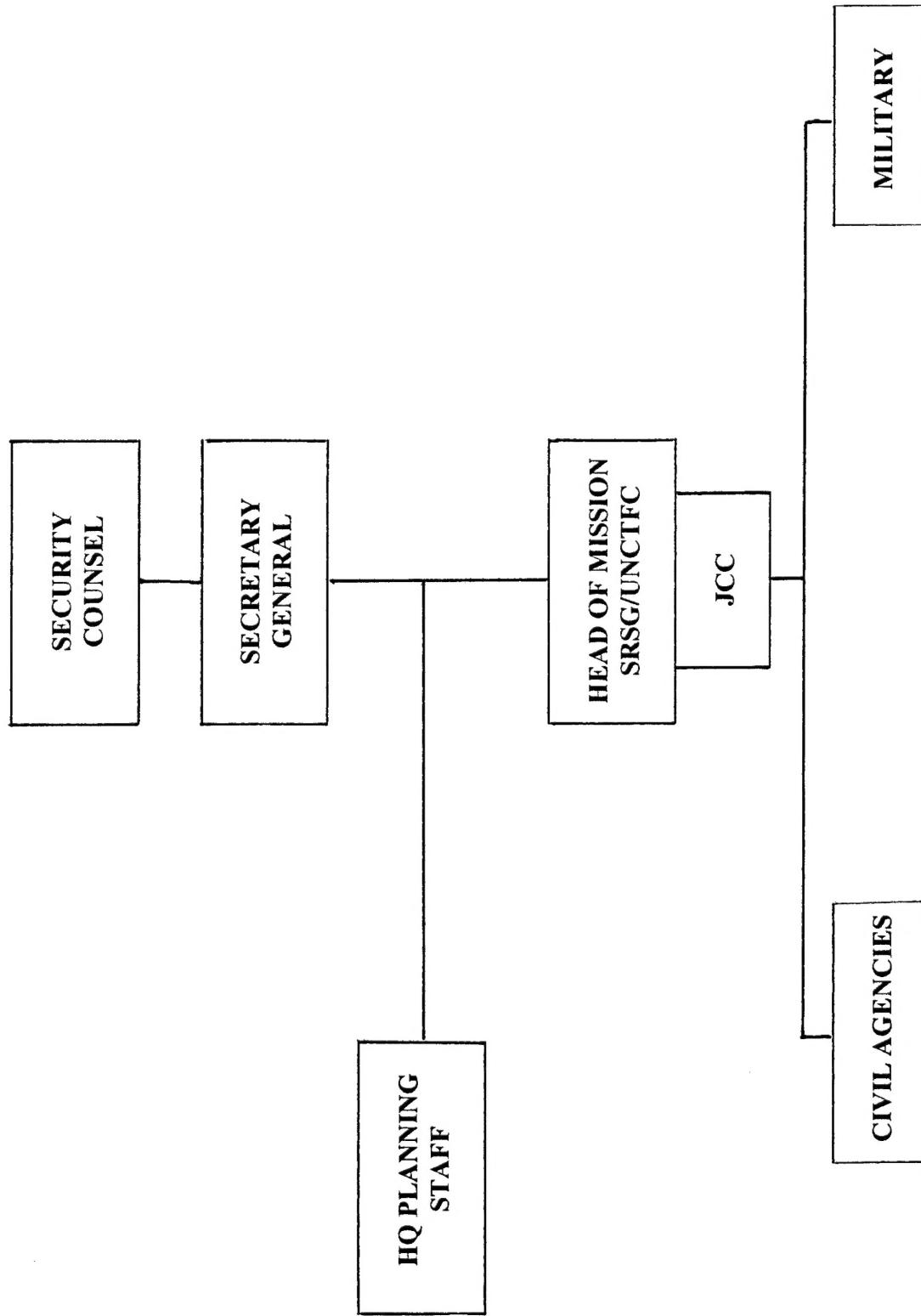
### Joint Coordination Cell in the Force Hierarchy



### Joint Coordination Cell Components



LO – Liaison Officer; SO AIR – Air Operations; SO G2 – Intelligence Staff; SO G3 – Operations Staff; SO G4 – Logistics Staff; SO G5 – Civil Affairs Staff.



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